Kingdom and Exile

Read how land, belief, and conquest shaped ancient Israel.

SS24.7.8 "Explain the geographic and cultural development of ancient Israel. 8a Identify the central tenets of Judaism, and compare Judaism to the polytheistic religions of other Mediterranean ancient civilizations..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details about the land, and circle two statements about Jewish belief. Number the Assyrian exile, the Babylonian exile, and the return under Persian rule in time order.

A Land, a Kingdom, and a People

1. Between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, ancient Israel occupied hills and valleys along routes linking Egypt and lands to the north and east. Rain helped farmers grow grain and olives, but dry seasons made water and good farmland valuable. Travelers and traders brought news and goods through the region. Many Israelites practiced Judaism, which taught belief in one God. They understood a covenant as a lasting relationship with God and followed laws about worship and daily life. In contrast, many ancient Mediterranean peoples worshiped several gods, often linked to forces of nature.

2. At first, Israelite tribes had no single king. Around 1000 BCE, Saul became king and helped unite them against enemies. David strengthened the kingdom and made Jerusalem its capital. His son Solomon built a temple there, making the city a major center of Jewish worship. Solomon also expanded trade and building projects, which required heavy taxes and labor. After his death, the kingdom split into northern Israel and southern Judah. The divided kingdoms were more vulnerable to powerful neighbors, and their people faced different waves of conquest and displacement.

3. Assyria conquered northern Israel around 722 BCE and deported many residents to other lands. Later, Babylon captured Jerusalem in 586 BCE, destroyed Solomon's temple, and forced many people from Judah into exile. When Persia conquered Babylon, its ruler Cyrus allowed Jewish exiles to return; they rebuilt the temple in Jerusalem. Not everyone returned, so Jewish communities also lived outside Judah. Centuries later, Rome ruled the region. After a Jewish revolt, Roman troops destroyed Jerusalem's second temple in 70 CE. Many Jews were killed or enslaved, while communities continued in the region and elsewhere.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did ancient Israel's location and dry seasons affect life there?

2. How did Jewish beliefs differ from the beliefs of many other ancient Mediterranean peoples?

3. How did Saul, David, and Solomon each help develop the kingdom? What happened after Solomon died?

4. How were the Assyrian and Babylonian conquests alike? How did Persian rule change what happened to some exiles?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a museum label for a stone from Jerusalem's second temple. In four or five sentences, explain how geography, one Jewish belief, the united kingdom, an exile and return, and the Roman destruction of Jerusalem shaped the history of the Jewish people.

ANSWER KEY

Kingdom and Exile

GRADE 7 · SS24.7.8

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details about the land, and circle two statements about Jewish belief. Number the Assyrian exile, the Babylonian exile, and the return under Persian rule in time order. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did ancient Israel's location and dry seasons affect life there?	**Routes through the region brought travelers and trade. Dry seasons made water and good farmland valuable.**
2	How did Jewish beliefs differ from the beliefs of many other ancient Mediterranean peoples?	**Judaism taught belief in one God and a covenant with God, while many other Mediterranean peoples worshiped several gods.**
3	How did Saul, David, and Solomon each help develop the kingdom? What happened after Solomon died?	**Saul helped unite the tribes, David strengthened the kingdom and made Jerusalem its capital, and Solomon built a temple there. After Solomon died, the kingdom split into Israel and Judah.**
4	How were the Assyrian and Babylonian conquests alike? How did Persian rule change what happened to some exiles?	**Both conquests forced people from their homes. Under Persian rule, Cyrus allowed Jewish exiles to return, and they rebuilt the temple in Jerusalem.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The hills between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River lay on busy routes that brought travelers through ancient Israel. Saul helped unite the tribes, David made Jerusalem the capital, and Solomon built a temple there for worship of one God. After Babylon destroyed that temple and exiled people from Judah, Persian rule allowed some exiles to return and rebuild it. Roman troops destroyed the second temple in 70 CE after a Jewish revolt. Jewish communities continued in the region and beyond it, even without their temple.

Accept accurate geographic details and either belief in one God or the covenant. For the museum label, look for a connected explanation that distinguishes the Babylonian destruction and return from the later Roman destruction.